

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

1. Agency/Subagency originating request	2. OMB control number b. <input type="checkbox"/> None a. _____ - _____
3. Type of information collection (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> New Collection b. <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of a currently approved collection c. <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of a currently approved collection d. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired e. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired f. <input type="checkbox"/> Existing collection in use without an OMB control number For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions	4. Type of review requested (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Regular submission b. <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency - Approval requested by _____ / _____ / _____ c. <input type="checkbox"/> Delegated 5. Small entities Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 6. Requested expiration date a. <input type="checkbox"/> Three years from approval date b. <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify: _____ / _____
7. Title	
8. Agency form number(s) (<i>if applicable</i>)	
9. Keywords	
10. Abstract	
11. Affected public (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals or households d. <input type="checkbox"/> Farms b. <input type="checkbox"/> Business or other for-profit e. <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government c. <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-profit institutions f. <input type="checkbox"/> State, Local or Tribal Government	12. Obligation to respond (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary b. <input type="checkbox"/> Required to obtain or retain benefits c. <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory
13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden a. Number of respondents _____ b. Total annual responses _____ 1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically _____ % c. Total annual hours requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____	14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (<i>in thousands of dollars</i>) a. Total annualized capital/startup costs _____ b. Total annual costs (O&M) _____ c. Total annualized cost requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____
15. Purpose of information collection (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Application for benefits e. <input type="checkbox"/> Program planning or management b. <input type="checkbox"/> Program evaluation f. <input type="checkbox"/> Research c. <input type="checkbox"/> General purpose statistics g. <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory or compliance d. <input type="checkbox"/> Audit	16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (<i>check all that apply</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Recordkeeping b. <input type="checkbox"/> Third party disclosure c. <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting 1. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasion 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annually 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Annually 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Biennially 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____
17. Statistical methods Does this information collection employ statistical methods <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission) Name: _____ Phone: _____

19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

- (a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;
- (b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;
- (c) It reduces burden on small entities;
- (d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;
- (e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;
- (f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;
- (g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):
 - (i) Why the information is being collected;
 - (ii) Use of information;
 - (iii) Burden estimate;
 - (iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);
 - (v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - (vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;
- (h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);
- (i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and
- (j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee

Date

Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator or head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or Staff Office)	
Signature	Date
Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer	
Signature	Date

**Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries
Vessel Permits
Renewal/Revision of Information Collection 0648-0327**

Section A. Justification:

1. Need for the Information

This Supporting Statement is submitted as part of a Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) request to renew and revise a current information collection that was approved under OMB control #0648-0327. The collection consists of a mandatory annual vessel permit program in the commercial and recreational fisheries for Atlantic tunas (bluefin, bigeye, albacore, yellowfin and skipjack). Permits may be obtained through the mail, or through an automated phone system (1-888-872-8862) or an internet site administered by AppNet, Inc. under contract to NMFS.

In addition to the renewal, NMFS requests a revision to the collection to expand the requirement for the annual vessel permit to all charter vessels and headboats conducting “for-hire” fishing operations for Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS). Currently, “for-hire” vessels must obtain a permit in the Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat category in order to lawfully fish for, or retain, any or all of the tunas referenced above. Under the revised requirement, a permit would be issued for the Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat category in lieu of the tuna permit. Such a permit would be inclusive of all HMS and would authorize “for-hire” fishing operations for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks and billfish.

The purpose of this collection of information is to comply with the United States' obligations under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975 (ATCA; 16 U.S.C. 971), and the Secretary of Commerce's obligations under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA), and the implementing regulations at 50 CFR part 635. ATCA requires the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). As a member nation of ICCAT, the United States is required to take part in the collection of biological statistics for research purposes (fishing effort and catch). In addition to this requirement, the United States, as one of the several member nations fishing for bluefin tuna and swordfish in the Atlantic Ocean, must abide by the specific quotas assigned to it by ICCAT. Other current ICCAT recommendations pertain to limiting fishing effort directed at, or catch of, bigeye, albacore and yellowfin tunas. As the Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish and shark fisheries are also managed under the MSFCMA, several of these fisheries are subject to restrictive catch quotas with the goal of recovering the stocks to a level commensurate with maximum sustainable yield.

Section 971d(c)(3) of the ATCA provides the statutory authority to require permits and the collection of information necessary to implement the recommendations of ICCAT. Section 303(b) of the MSFCMA also provides statutory authority to require vessel permits for fisheries governed by management plans issued by the Secretary of Commerce.

2. Uses and Users of the Information

Collection of information through annual vessel permits provides current information on the vessel owners participating in the Atlantic tuna fisheries and the “for-hire” sector of the Atlantic HMS fisheries, thus facilitating quota monitoring necessary to avoid exceeding catch quotas. A current permit list aids NMFS in the communication of fishery regulations (management program brochures, fish identification guides, regulatory compliance guides). In addition, NMFS operates a mandatory angler catch reporting program for bluefin tuna that is linked to the permit number to avoid false reporting and facilitate enforcement. NMFS also requires that vessel permits be displayed to dealers and that permit numbers be recorded on dealer reports in order to validate landings of HMS. Finally, NMFS constructs sample frames for dockside and telephone surveys from the permit list and uses the list to select vessels for logbooks and/or at-seas observers. Such surveys, logbooks and observer reports provide essential information for management of the Atlantic tunas and HMS fisheries in the United States, particularly in terms of allocation decisions which follow ICCAT and MSFCMA recommendations (allocate fishing opportunities consistent with traditional fishing patterns and considering the economic values to various user groups).

The information collected under telephone, internet or hard copy application includes:

- (1) Vessel owner, corporate status and address/phone
- (2) Vessel name, registration, and port
- (3) Vessel characteristics and construction type
- (4) Atlantic Tunas/HMS permit history and gear category
- (5) Signature and payment/delivery information

The automated permitting systems (telephone and website) are administered by AppNet, Inc. under contract to NMFS and fees are collected through credit card transactions. Paper applications are also processed through the same database management application but checks and money orders are processed through a NOAA lock box.

If this information collection were not conducted, the United States would continue to have difficulty in complying with international obligations under ICCAT, possibly resulting in violations of ICCAT catch recommendations. ICCAT penalties may include reduction in the assigned country catch quota equal to a minimum of 125% of the excess harvest. In addition, trade restrictions may be imposed on countries that fail to restrict catch to the level of the assigned quotas.

Determining the status of the Atlantic HMS resources would be less accurate without this information, since all contracting parties to ICCAT must submit catch and effort information on an annual basis. Without such catch and effort statistics, the conservation and management objectives of ICCAT with respect to the tuna and swordfish rebuilding programs could be jeopardized. Furthermore, it would be difficult for the United States to formulate domestic policy consistent with the MSFCMA, which must be based on sound socio-economic and biological data and analyses. NMFS would be less able to prepare documents such as the RIR, EIS, etc., as required under the MSFCMA, NEPA, and other applicable laws.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology

NMFS has set up automated systems for both telephone and internet applications for vessel permits. Both systems are available on a 7 day/24 hour basis, and are available at no charge to the angler. Hard copy applications can be obtained directly from the internet site or through the mail via an automated internet or phone request.

The system combines public and private infrastructure to issue about 25,000 permits annually and is paid for by the permittees. The automated permitting system provides a spectrum of user friendly pathways based on different information technologies to obtain information about the fishery and changes in regulations, obtain the latest application forms, pay for and receive permits, and report recreationally landed bluefin tuna. A vessel owner can track the application process and permit status via the internet. Once application processing is complete, a permit can be printed off the website or faxed or mailed back to the vessel owner. The program has dramatically increased on-time delivery of permits to the constituents by offering innovative delivery methods.

4. Consideration of Other Collections

While many tuna and charter/headboat vessels participate in other federally regulated fisheries for which permits are issued, there is a need to develop a specific list of vessels active in the tuna or HMS fisheries. Examining NMFS' northeast and southeast regional permit databases and state or coast guard vessel registration databases could provide the same information on vessels and owners, but would not be able to provide NMFS with specific information on the gear types and participation rates for the specific HMS fisheries. Such fishery specific information can be obtained in a more efficient manner through a separate tuna or HMS permit. However, NMFS is investigating means to consolidate the permitting process so that multiple permits may be issued/renewed through a single application process.

5. Impact and Problems for Small Businesses

Annual vessel permitting does not have a significant impact on small businesses, organizations or government bodies. The permitting process is estimated to be an average burden of only 30 minutes per initial application and 6 minutes per renewal.

6. Consideration of Less Frequent Reporting

Collection of information on tuna fisheries participants less frequently than annually does not provide the up-to-date sampling frame that is the basis for fleet size calculations used for catch and effort estimates. Many vessels change hands or are moved from year to year. Annual permitting thus provides a more accurate vessel list and facilitates quota monitoring and data collections necessary to meet ICCAT obligations.

7. Consistency with OMB Guidelines

Collection of information will be made in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Public Comment

NMFS published a Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission (65 FR 11039, March 1, 2000). Although no public comments were received in response to that notice, NMFS has taken action in response to comments received during a prior rulemaking and at public meetings of the HMS Advisory Panel.

Specifically, during the development of the HMS fishery management plan in 1999, the HMS advisory panel recommended that NMFS collect more information from the “for-hire” sector. There was a concern that the Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit did not provide a sample frame that was representative of vessels fishing for billfish and sharks. In response, NMFS proposed to replace the Atlantic Tunas Charter/Headboat category permit with an Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permit. Favorable comments were received relative to a consolidated HMS permit for the charter and headboat sector. While NMFS established such regulations in the final rule, the effective date of the HMS Charter/Headboat permit was delayed pending OMB approval under the PRA. In the meantime, NMFS continues to issue the Atlantic Tunas Charter/Headboat permit and has informed permit holders that such permit would be valid as an HMS Charter/Headboat permit should OMB approve the new HMS category prior to expiration of the tuna permit.

In response to comments received on the automated permitting system, NMFS has implemented fax back and print-off-the-web features and on-line status tracking. Further, NMFS no longer requires submission of supporting documents with the initial application (e.g., coast guard registration). All these changes expedite the issuance of permits which was the primary concern of fishery participants, rather than the time burden.

9. Payments

No payments or gifts are provided to respondents.

10. Confidentiality

There is a PRA statement printed on notification materials (letter to permit holders, application forms, internet site). It is NOAA policy to preserve the confidentiality of information submitted under this reporting requirement, except that NMFS may release such information in aggregate or summary form, such that individual identifiers are not disclosed (NAO 216-100).

11. Sensitive Information

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of Burden

In calendar year 1999, the total number of permits issued/renewed was 23,123. Of these, 18,016 permits were renewals. For the renewals, 7,140 were renewed by the automated telephone system and 10,876 were renewed over the website either directly by the vessel owner or with the assistance of a customer service representative. In 1999, a total of 5,107 new permits were processed via hard copy applications.

Based on expected renewals for tuna permits (6 minutes per response), new applications for tuna permits (30 minutes per response) and the change to an HMS permit for the Charter/Headboat category (30 minutes for initial permits and 6 minutes for renewals), NMFS expects 25,000 permits to be issued as follows:

Permit Type	New Permits (30 min)	Renewals (6 min)	Total
Atlantic tunas Permits Burden	4,400 2,200 hrs	15,600 1,560 hrs	20,000 3,760 hrs
HMS Charter/Headboat Permits Burden	1,100 550 hrs	3,900 390 hrs	5,000 940 hrs
Total Permits Burden	5,500 2,750 hrs	19,500 1,950 hrs	25,000 4,700 hrs

The total estimated burden is therefore 4,700 hours on an annual basis.

13. Cost Burden

An administrative cost recovery fee of \$25 is currently charged for the annual permit for Atlantic tunas vessels and would be charged for the HMS charter/headboat permits. Internet or toll-free phone renewals incur no additional costs but postage or phone charges would accrue to respondents submitting new or renewal applications by mail or fax. Applicants may receive the completed permit by mail or fax at no additional charge, but express mail delivery incurs an additional \$3.55 processing and mailing fee. Total costs to the public are estimated at \$625,000 per year for the application processing fee. Year-to-date renewals for 2000 are about 85% by

phone or web site. Therefore, it is estimated that about 15% of applications will be sent by mail at a cost of \$0.50 each response, and about 1% of respondents will request express delivery at \$3.55 per response. Total costs to the public including fee and postage and handling are thus estimated at $\$625,000 + \$1875 + \$890 = \$627,765$.

14. Cost to Federal Government

Annualized cost to the Federal government can be obtained by multiplying the fee for the AppNet contract of \$40,721/mo by

12 months = \$488,652. Additional costs of about \$135,000 per year are incurred by NMFS for contract management and occasional activities in support of the information postings on the website (i.e., updates to regulations, catch limits, fishing seasons). The total costs amount to about \$25 each for the anticipated 25,000 permits for the 2000 fishing year. NMFS will recalculate total costs on an annual basis and determine average costs based on the actual number of permits issued. The cost recovery fee will then be adjusted as required.

15. Program changes

The requested burden is 4,700 hours, an increase of 1,900 hours from the 2,800 hours currently approved for this collection. The change in burden is attributable to adjustments and a program change. It is expected that approximately 4,000 more Atlantic tunas permits will be issued than the level originally estimated for the prior approval (1400 hours). Also, the conversion from the Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit to an Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permit will affect a broader range of vessels. This program change is expected to result in 1,000 additional vessel permits (500 hours). Those vessels with the Atlantic Tunas Charter/Headboat permit for the 2000 fishing year will automatically convert to the new HMS permit upon renewal in 2001, there will not be a requirement for both permits.

16. Publication of Results

No publication of information is planned other than annual summary tables of the total number of permits issued by category, state and primary gear type. Such tables may appear in reports to ICCAT, Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation reports, Environmental Assessments, Regulatory Impact Reviews, etc.

17. Display of Expiration Date

The control number and expiration date for OMB approval are displayed on all hardcopy forms (applications and/or instructions) and under the permit information screen on the web site.

18. Exceptions to certification statement

No exceptions are requested.

Section B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

This collection does not employ statistical methods.

- Attachments**
- ATCA, MSFCMA and CFR Regulatory text
 - Federal Register request for comments on renewal
 - Web-Based Permitting Program
 - Telephone-Based Permitting Program
 - Paper Application Permitting Program

Atlantic Tunas Convention Act

16 United States Code Section 971

TITLE 16--CONSERVATION

CHAPTER 16A--ATLANTIC TUNAS CONVENTION

* * * * *

Sec. 971d. Administration

* * * * *

(c) Regulations to carry out Commission recommendations

* * * * *

(3) The regulations required to be promulgated under paragraph (1) of this subsection may--

* * * * *

(I) require any commercial or recreational fisherman to obtain a permit from the Secretary and report the quantity of the catch of a regulated species;

* * * * *

CITE: 16 USC 1853

TITLE 16--CONSERVATION

CHAPTER 38--FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

SUBCHAPTER IV--NATIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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Sec. 1853. Contents of fishery management plans

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(b) Discretionary provisions

Any fishery management plan which is prepared by any Council, or by the Secretary, with respect to any fishery, may--

(1) require a permit to be obtained from, and fees to be paid to, the Secretary, with respect to--

(A) any fishing vessel of the United States fishing, or wishing to fish, in the exclusive economic zone or for anadromous species or Continental Shelf fishery resources beyond such zone;

(B) the operator of any such vessel; or

(C) any United States fish processor who first receives fish that are subject to the plan;

* * * * *

Code of Federal Regulations - Title 50, Wildlife and Fisheries

50 CFR part 635

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species

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§ 635.4 Permits and fees.

Information on permits and permit requirements may be obtained from the Division Chief or where otherwise stated in this part.

(a) General. (1) Authorized activities. Each permit issued by NMFS authorizes certain activities, and persons may not conduct these activities without the appropriate permit, unless otherwise authorized by NMFS in accordance with this part.

(2) Vessel permit inspection. The owner or operator of a vessel of the United States must have the appropriate valid permit on board the vessel to fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas, when engaged in commercial or recreational fishing, and to fish for, take, retain or possess Atlantic swordfish or sharks when engaged in commercial fishing. The vessel operator and must make such permit available for inspection upon request by NMFS or a person authorized by NMFS. The owner of the vessel is responsible for satisfying all of the requirements associated with obtaining, maintaining, and making available for inspection, all valid vessel permits.

(3) Property rights. Limited access vessel permits or any other permit issued pursuant to this part do not represent either an absolute right to the resource or any interest that is subject to the takings provision of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Rather, limited access vessel permits represent only a harvesting privilege that may be revoked, suspended, or amended subject to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act or other applicable law.

(4) Dealer permit inspection. A dealer permit issued under this section, or a copy thereof, must be available at each of the dealer's places of business. A dealer must present the permit or a copy for inspection upon the request of a NMFS-authorized officer.

(5) Display upon offloading. Upon transfer of Atlantic HMS, the owner or operator of the harvesting vessel must present for inspection the vessel's Atlantic tunas, shark, or swordfish permit to the receiving dealer. The permit must be presented prior to completing any applicable landing report specified at § 635.5(a)(1), (a)(2) and (b)(2)(i).

(6) Sanctions and denials. A permit issued under this section may be revoked, suspended, or modified, and a permit application may be denied, in accordance with the procedures governing enforcement-related permit sanctions and denials found at subpart D of 15 CFR part 904.

(7) Alteration. A vessel or dealer permit that is altered, erased, mutilated, or otherwise modified is invalid.

(8) Replacement. NMFS may issue a replacement permit upon the request of the permittee. An application for a replacement permit will not be considered a new application. An appropriate fee, consistent with paragraph (b) of this section, may be charged for issuance of the replacement permit.

(9) Fees. NMFS may charge a fee for each application for a permit or for each transfer or

replacement of a permit. The amount of the fee is calculated in accordance with the procedures of the NOAA Finance Handbook, available from NMFS, for determining administrative costs of each special product or service. The fee may not exceed such costs and is specified in the instructions provided with each application form. Each applicant must include the appropriate fee with each application or request for transfer or replacement. A permit will not be issued to anyone who fails to pay the fee.

(b) HMS Charter/Headboat Permits. (1) The owner of a charter boat or headboat used to fish for, take, retain, or possess any Atlantic HMS must obtain an HMS Charter/Headboat permit.

(2) While persons aboard a vessel that has been issued an HMS Charter/Headboat permit are fishing for or are in possession of Atlantic HMS, the operator of the vessel must have a valid Merchant Marine License or Uninspected Passenger Vessel License, as applicable, issued by the U.S. Coast Guard pursuant to regulations at 46 CFR part 10. Such Coast Guard license must be carried on board the vessel.

(c) [Reserved.]

(d) Atlantic Tunas vessel permits. (1) The owner of each vessel used to fish for or take Atlantic tunas or on which Atlantic tunas are retained or possessed must obtain, in addition to any other required permits, a permit in one and only one of the following categories: Angling, Charter/Headboat, General, Harpoon, Longline, Purse Seine, or Trap.

(2) Persons aboard a vessel with a valid Atlantic Tunas vessel permit or a valid HMS Charter/Headboat permit may fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas, but only in compliance with the quotas, catch limits, size classes, and gear applicable to the permit category of the vessel from which he or she is fishing. Persons may sell Atlantic tunas only if the harvesting vessel's valid permit is in the General, Harpoon, Charter/Headboat, Longline, Purse Seine, or Trap category of the Atlantic Tunas permit or is a valid HMS Charter/Headboat permit. Persons may not sell Atlantic tunas caught on board a vessel issued a permit in the Angling category.

(3) Except for purse seine vessels for which that permit has been issued under this section, a vessel owner may change the category of the vessel's permit no more than once each year and only from January 1 through May 15. From May 16 through December 31, the vessel's permit category may not be changed, regardless of a change in the vessel's ownership.

(4) A person can obtain an Atlantic Tunas Longline category permit for a vessel only if the vessel has been issued both a limited access permit for shark and a limited access permit for swordfish. NMFS will issue Atlantic Tunas Longline category permits to qualifying vessels in calendar year 1999. Thereafter, such permits may be obtained through transfer from current owners consistent with the provisions under paragraph (1)(2) of this section.

(5) An owner of a vessel with an Atlantic Tunas permit in the Purse Seine category may transfer the permit to another purse seine vessel that he or she owns. In either case, the owner must submit a written request for transfer to NMFS, to an address designated by NMFS, and attach an application for the new vessel and the existing permit. NMFS will issue no more than 5 Atlantic Tunas Purse Seine category permits.

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NMFS Permit Web Page:

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: Collection of information through annual permitting serves three purposes: (1) it provides current information on the vessel owners participating in the Atlantic tuna fisheries; (2) it provides an up-to-date sampling frame that is the basis for fleet size calculations used for catch and effort estimates in fisheries that do not require mandatory reporting, thus enabling the U.S. to meet international obligations to report catch statistics for Atlantic tunas; and, (3) aids NMFS in the enforcement of fishery regulations. Public reporting burden for this permit application is estimated to average 30 minutes per response for initial permits, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing & reviewing the collection of information. Permits may be renewed through a paper application, by using an automated phone system at (888) 872-8862, or by accessing the web site at www.nmfspermits.com. Public reporting burden for renewal by telephone or web is estimated to average 6 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: National Marine Fisheries Service, F/SF1, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Providing the requested information in the permit application is mandatory for managing the Atlantic tuna fisheries in accordance with the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 971 et seq.) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). It is agency policy not to release confidential information, other than in aggregate form, as the Magnuson-Stevens Act protects (in perpetuity) the confidentiality of those submitting information. Summaries of permit information by category may be released. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. This is an approved information collection under OMB #0648-0327 and expires August 31, 2000.

Dear Atlantic Tunas or Charter/Headboat Permit Applicant or Renewal Applicant,

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issues Federal fisheries permits to all vessels fishing for Atlantic tunas and, beginning in 2000, to Charter/Headboats fishing for any Highly Migratory Species (HMS - Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish, and billfish). These permits are renewable on an annual basis. The enclosed package provides the form you need to purchase a new permit or renew an existing one, and the instructions for completing the form.

How to Apply

To submit an initial (new) or renewal application, you may:

- Complete the appropriate form and submit it by mail with your payment.
- Complete an online application at the NMFS permit shop at: www.nmfspermits.com.
- Complete a renewal using your phone by calling (888) 872-8862.

The renewal process is easy: only enter information if it has changed from the previous permit. Using the Internet allows you to print your permit immediately. Otherwise, you may have your permit delivered by Priority Mail (at an additional charge of \$3.55), regular mail, or fax.

Important information regarding Atlantic Tunas and Charter/Headboat Permits:

Atlantic tunas permits - **NMFS no longer requires submission of copies of the following with the permit application: vessel documentation or state registration, Certificate/Articles of Incorporation, Partnership Agreement, or Annual Report.** However, a copy of the vessel's valid U.S. Coast Guard documentation or, if not documented, a copy of its valid state registration must be carried on board the vessel. If the vessel is owned by a corporation or partnership, the owner must maintain the required corporate or partnership documents.

Charter/Headboat permits -

- The owner of a charter boat or headboat used to fish for, take, retain, or possess any Atlantic HMS must obtain an HMS Charter/Headboat permit. This requirement will be effective once NMFS gets final approval for the collection of information contained in the associated application from the Office of Management and Budget. If you apply for or renew a permit for a charter boat or headboat prior to this effective date, you will be issued an Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit. Once the HMS Charter/Headboat permit requirement is effective, your Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit will be valid for use as an HMS Charter/Headboat permit. There will therefore be no need for your Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit to be replaced prior to its expiration date of May 31, 2001. The HMS Charter/Headboat permit will be renewable on an annual (fishing year) basis, i.e., you would renew your permit in late spring 2001 for the 2001 fishing year.
- While persons aboard a vessel that has been issued an HMS Charter/Headboat permit are fishing for or are in possession of Atlantic HMS, the operator of the vessel must have a valid Merchant Marine License or Uninspected Passenger Vessel License. **You do not need to submit a copy of this license to obtain your permit but the license must be carried on board the vessel.**

Limited Access

The control date for the Atlantic tuna fisheries is September 1, 1994. This means that anyone who entered the Atlantic tuna fisheries after September 1, 1994, may not be assured of future access to the commercial tuna fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean. Currently, the Purse Seine and Longline fisheries are managed under limited access.

Initial application vs. Renewal:

- If you need a permit for a vessel that is new to you, **even if the previous owner held an Atlantic tunas permit**, you must fill out the initial application form.
- If you previously held an Atlantic tunas permit for the vessel you currently own, even if the permit has lapsed, please fill out the renewal form.

Please fill out **either** the initial application form **or** the renewal form, as appropriate. **Do not fill out both forms!** If you are not sure which form to submit, please contact Customer Service at (888) 872-8862. If you own more than one vessel, please make copies of the blank form and submit a separate form/payment for each vessel. If you are renewing your permit, you may check your permit information first via the Internet (www.nmfspermits.com) or by phoning the automated permit system at (888) 872-8862. If you choose to change permit categories, you may do so only once per year, and you must make the change before May 15, to take effect for the beginning of the fishing year June 1.

Payment and Mailing Address:

If you are paying by credit card, please complete and submit the enclosed credit card authorization form. We accept Visa, Master Card, Discover, and American Express. If you are paying by money order, make the money order payable to NMFS Permits in the amount of \$25.00. **All other forms of payment will be returned to you, delaying the processing of your order.** Mail your application(s) and payment(s) to:

NOAA, 21056 Network Place, Chicago, IL 60673-1210

Processing your order:

NMFS will process your order within 3 business days of receiving a complete application (including payment). Please indicate on your application or renewal form if you would like to receive your permit by Priority Mail, regular mail, or fax, or if you prefer to print the permit from your computer via the Internet at www.nmfspermits.com. This last option allows you to print the permit yourself once it has been processed (about 3 business days after your phone renewal or your application, including payment, has been received).

Questions:

If you have any questions concerning the processing of your permit, please phone (888) 872-8862 and select the Customer Service option. Customer Service representatives are available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time. You may also view the status of your permit via the Internet at www.nmfspermits.com.

For questions regarding Atlantic tuna fisheries or HMS Charter/Headboat regulations, contact NMFS's Highly Migratory Species Management Division at (978) 281-9260.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Lent, Chief, Highly Migratory Species Management Division



NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

INITIAL ATLANTIC TUNAS PERMIT APPLICATION

(READ INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE INITIAL APPLICATION)



SECTION 1 – OWNER INFORMATION

Owner Type (choose one): ☐ Individual ☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation

Owner or Corporation Name (if more than one individual, circle name of primary contact): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Fax: _____

SECTION 2 – VESSEL INFORMATION

Vessel Name (if vessel is unnamed, write “unnamed”): _____

CG Documentation Number: _____ State Registration Number: _____

Home Port: _____ (City, State) Principal Port, if different: _____ (City, State)

Vessel Length: _____ (to nearest foot) Year Built: _____

Crew Size: _____ Construction: ☐ Wood ☐ Fiberglass ☐ Steel ☐ Other

Gross Tonnage: _____ Propulsion: ☐ Gasoline ☐ Diesel ☐ Other

Main Engine Horsepower: _____ Hold Capacity, if applicable: _____ (pounds)

Number of Passengers licensed to carry for Charter/Headboat: ☐ 6 or less OR Number, if more than 6: _____

PERMIT HISTORY

If obtaining a new permit for a vessel which has been previously permitted for Atlantic tunas, please enter previous tuna Permit Number here (if known): _____

If canceling a permit for a vessel you previously owned (because the vessel has been sold, destroyed, etc.) please indicate Permit Number to be canceled here: _____

SECTION 3 – ATLANTIC TUNAS FISHERY INFORMATION

Category (check only one)

- ☐ Charter/Headboat
☐ General
☐ Angling (Recreational)
☐ Harpoon
☐ Longline.....
☐ Trap

Primary Gear Type (check only one)

- ☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline ☐ Bandit gear
☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline ☐ Harpoon ☐ Bandit gear
☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline
 (Harpoon only)
 (Longline only)
☐ Pound Net ☐ Fish Weir

SECTION 4 – OWNER'S SIGNATURE The undersigned is the owner or legally-authorized agent of the owner of the vessel named in Section 1 above. Issuance of a permit in one of the commercial categories (categories other than Angling) subjects a vessel to applicable requirements of the Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988 (46 CFR 25.28). Call the U.S. Coast Guard for details.

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Print Name: _____

SECTION 5 – PAYMENT/DELIVERY INFORMATION: There is a \$25.00 charge for the Atlantic tunas permit. Note delivery surcharge below. Mail this initial application and payment to: **NOAA, 21056 Network Place, Chicago, IL 60673-1210**

☐ Check if paying by money order (**payable to NMFS Permits**)

☐ Check if paying by credit card and fill out the information below:

Credit Card Type (check one): ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Account Number: _____ Expiration Date (MM/YY): _____

Card Holder Name: _____ Signature: _____

Billing address for credit card, if different than address above: _____ Date: _____

DELIVERY OPTIONS (CHECK ONE):

☐ Send permit by Priority Mail at additional charge of \$3.55

☐ Fax permit to number indicated in Section 1

☐ Send permit by regular mail

☐ I will print my permit from the Internet once processed



NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ATLANTIC TUNAS PERMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION

(READ INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE RENEWAL APPLICATION)



SECTION 1 – OWNER INFORMATION

Owner Type (choose one): ☐ Individual ☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation

Owner or Corporation Name (if more than one individual, circle name of primary contact): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Fax: _____

SECTION 2 – VESSEL INFORMATION

Permit Number: _____

Indicate any changes in vessel information below, if applicable. Otherwise, skip to Section 3.

Vessel Name (if vessel is unnamed, write “unnamed”): _____

CG Documentation Number: _____ State Registration Number: _____

Home Port: _____ (City, State) Principal Port, if different: _____ (City, State)

Vessel Length: _____ (to nearest foot) Year Built: _____

Crew Size: _____ Construction: ☐ Wood ☐ Fiberglass ☐ Steel ☐ Other

Gross Tonnage: _____ Propulsion: ☐ Gasoline ☐ Diesel ☐ Other

Main Engine Horsepower: _____ Hold Capacity, if applicable: _____ (pounds)

Number of Passengers licensed to carry for Charter/Headboat: ☐ 6 or less OR Number, if more than 6: _____

SECTION 3 – ATLANTIC TUNAS FISHING CATEGORY INFORMATION

Indicate any changes in category or gear information below, if applicable. Otherwise, skip to Section 4.

Category (check only one)

- ☐ Charter/Headboat
☐ General
☐ Angling (Recreational)
☐ Harpoon
☐ Longline.....
☐ Trap

Primary Gear Type (check only one)

- ☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline ☐ Bandit gear
☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline ☐ Harpoon ☐ Bandit gear
☐ Rod & Reel ☐ Handline
 (Harpoon only)
 (Longline only)
☐ Pound Net ☐ Fish Weir

SECTION 4 – OWNER'S SIGNATURE The undersigned is the owner or legally-authorized agent of the owner of the vessel named in Section 1 above. Issuance of a permit in one of the commercial categories (categories other than Angling) subjects a vessel to applicable requirements of the Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988 (46 CFR 25.28). Call the U.S. Coast Guard for details.

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Print Name: _____

SECTION 5 – PAYMENT/DELIVERY INFORMATION: There is a \$25.00 charge for the Atlantic tunas permit. Note delivery surcharge below. Mail this renewal application and payment to: **NOAA, 21056 Network Place, Chicago, IL 60673-1210**

☐ Check if paying by money order (payable to NMFS Permits)

☐ Check if paying by credit card and fill out the information below:

Credit Card Type (check one): ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Account Number: _____ Expiration Date (MM/YY): _____

Card Holder Name: _____ Signature: _____

Billing address for credit card, if different than address above: _____ Date: _____

DELIVERY OPTIONS (CHECK ONE):

☐ Send permit by Priority Mail at additional charge of \$3.55

☐ Fax permit to number indicated in Section 1

☐ Send permit by regular mail

☐ I will print my permit from the Internet once processed

FEDERAL ATLANTIC TUNAS PERMIT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

An Atlantic tunas permit is required to fish commercially and recreationally for bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye, albacore, and skipjack tunas. Please complete the attached application/renewal form and return to the address indicated at the bottom of the form. If your application/renewal, including payment, is complete, your permit will be mailed, faxed, or available to print (depending on your preferred delivery method) within 3 business days. Questions on the permit application/renewal process? Call (888) 872-8862; for tuna fisheries regulations: (978) 281-9260; for Fishing Vessel Safety Act regulations: (617) 223-8315.

The following information is provided to help you complete the application/renewal form.

- A permit may be owned by more than one person, but the owner information should match the owner information on the vessel's state registration or U.S. Coast Guard documentation. If more than one person is listed, please indicate the person who will be the primary point of contact for the permit.
- If you would like your permit faxed, please indicate the appropriate fax number in Section 1 and select the fax option in Section 5. If you would like to print your permit from your printer via the Internet (www.nmfspermits.com) once the permit is processed (approximately 3 business days), select the print option in Section 5.
- If your vessel is unnamed, write "unnamed" in the space for Vessel Name in Section 2.
- The vessel's home port refers to the port where the vessel is located for most of the year. The principal port refers to the port where the majority of the vessel's landings occur. The vessel's home and principal port may be different.
- If your vessel is constructed of more than one material, choose "other". Please check only one box.
- You do not need to submit copies of state registration or U.S. Coast Guard documentation as NMFS no longer requires submission of copies with the permit application. However, a copy of the vessel's valid U.S. Coast Guard documentation or, if not documented, a copy of its valid state registration must be carried on board the vessel and must match the information on the Atlantic tunas permit.
- For vessels owned by a partnership or corporation, you do not need to submit a copy of the letter of partnership or article of incorporation, but you are advised to maintain the corporate or partnership document in your files and must furnish the document to NMFS upon request.
- For Charter/Headboat permits, you do not need to submit a copy of a captain's license as NMFS no longer requires submission of a copy with the permit application. However, while persons aboard a vessel that has been issued an Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat permit are fishing for or are in possession of Atlantic tunas, the operator of the vessel must have a valid Merchant Marine License or Uninspected Passenger Vessel License, issued by the U.S. Coast Guard; **this license must be carried on board the vessel.**
- Commercial vessels are subject to the Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988. For information, contact the U.S. Coast Guard office in your district:

Maine to New York	(617) 223-8315	South Carolina to Florida	(305) 536-5091
New Jersey to North Carolina	(757) 398-6304	Gulf of Mexico	(504) 589-4999
- You may select only ONE permit category. After you choose your category, you are allowed to make ONE change to your category (at an additional fee), as long as the change is made before May 15, to take effect for the beginning of the fishing year, June 1. You may check your permit's current category by calling (888) 872-8862 and following the instructions.

Information regarding categories:

COMMERCIAL CATEGORIES: Commercial size tuna taken under any of these categories may be sold.

Minimum sizes for sale: **Atlantic bluefin tuna:** ≥ 73 inches total curved fork length (CFL)

Yellowfin and bigeye tuna: ≥ 27 inches CFL **Other tunas:** no minimum sizes

CHARTER/HEADBOAT: Owners of charter boats or headboats used to fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas must obtain this permit. For bluefin tuna, anglers aboard Charter/Headboat-permitted vessels may collectively fish under either the Angling or General category daily retention limit, but not both on the same day. Commercial size tunas taken aboard vessels permitted in the Charter/ Headboat category may be sold to licensed dealers only. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, and bandit gear.

LONGLINE: Vessel owners conducting longline operations that may result in the incidental taking of large medium and giant BFT or in the directed/incidental taking of other Atlantic tunas must obtain this permit. The number of Longline permits is LIMITED, i.e., a vessel owner seeking to obtain a Longline permit must obtain a Longline permit from a qualified permit holder. IMPORTANT: A total of 3 permits must be obtained to use longlines to fish for tunas: swordfish, shark, and tuna Longline permits; the shark and swordfish permits may be either directed or incidental. Directed swordfish and shark permits are subject to upgrading and ownership restrictions; incidental permits are not. For further information on swordfish and shark regulations, please call the Highly Migratory Species Management Division at (301) 713-2347. For information on transfer and upgrading procedures, please call the Southeast Regional Office Permits Division at (727) 570-5236. Authorized gear: longline only.

TRAP: Vessel owners who conduct trap operations that may result in the incidental taking of large medium and giant BFT must obtain this permit. Note that only one BFT per year may be retained. Authorized gear: pound nets and fish weirs.

GENERAL: Vessel owners who harvest Atlantic tunas, including large medium and giant BFT, by handgear and plan to sell the tuna must obtain this permit. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, harpoon, and bandit gear.

HARPOON: Vessel owners who conduct a commercial harpoon fishery for Atlantic tunas, including large medium and giant BFT, must obtain this permit. Vessels permitted in the Harpoon category may not participate in the General category fishery.

RECREATIONAL CATEGORY. Tuna taken under the Angling category size and retention limits MAY NOT be sold.

Minimum sizes for possession: **Atlantic bluefin tuna:** ≥ 27 inches CFL

Yellowfin and bigeye tuna: ≥ 27 inches CFL **Other tunas:** no minimum sizes

ANGLING: Private recreational vessel owners who harvest Atlantic tunas, including school, large school, and small medium BFT must obtain this permit. Angling category permit holders may retain one large medium or giant “trophy” BFT per year. All BFT must be reported within 24 hours of landing to NMFS by calling (888) 872-8862. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: Collection of information through annual permitting serves three purposes: (1) it provides current information on the vessel owners participating in the Atlantic tuna fisheries. (2) it provides an up-to-date sampling frame that is the basis for fleet size calculations used for catch and effort estimates in fisheries that do not require mandatory reporting, thus enabling the U.S. to meet international obligations to report catch statistics for Atlantic tunas, and (3) aids NMFS in the enforcement of fishery regulations. Public reporting burden for this initial permit application of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completed & reviewing the collection of information. Permit renewals are accomplished by using an automated phone system at (888) 872-8862 or by accessing the web site at www.nmfspermits.com. Public reporting burden for renewal by telephone or web is estimated to average 6 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: National Marine Fisheries Service, F/SF1, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Providing the requested information in the permit application is mandatory for managing the Atlantic tuna fisheries in accordance with the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 971 et seq.) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). It is agency policy not to release confidential information, other than in aggregate form, as the Magnuson-Stevens Act protects (in perpetuity) the confidentiality of those submitting information. Summaries of permit information by category may be released. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. This is an approved information collection under OMB #0648-0327 and expires 07/31/2000.